

Magnuson Park Advisory Committee
The Goodman Room of the Mountaineers
April 10, 2013 6 – 7:30 PM

Attending: MPAC Members: Julianna Ross, Ed Bronsdon, Nancy Bolin, Peter Zimmerman, Aaron Hoard, Gail Chiarello, Morgan Collins, Tom Kelly, Herb Curl, Diana Kincaid. Parks staff: Cheryl Fraser. Absent: Loren Hill, Rusty Williams. Guests: Janet Pope (Seattle Musical Theater), Leslie Yuenger and Dina Ginn (US Navy), Art Brochet (SDOT), the Honorable Gerry Pollet, Roger Shands

Chair Julianna Ross called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

Announcements from the Chair:

- Lynn Ferguson's husband died a week ago; a condolence card is being passed around for MPAC members to sign.
- Representative Gerry Pollet is on his way up from Olympia to speak to MPAC about Building 9 and should be here by 7PM.
- Several CleanScapes proposals are due April 15th. Three have been submitted on behalf of the park, including art bike racks, an interim visitor's center, and interpretive signs.
- Cycletrak is now up and running; Pete Zimmerman and Ed Bronsdon have enjoyed the speedy new connection between the park and the Burke-Gilman Trail. Diana Kincaid expressed concern about the bus stop at Sand Point Way NE and NE 65th Street. Now that the Cycletrak link between the Burke-Gilman Trail and Magnuson Park is operational, she has witnessed several near-accidents as cyclists race through the intersection; the bus stop blocks visibility. She suggested MPAC write to Metro and request the bus stop be moved several feet away. Tom Kelly said that the track barrier and a vertical barrier reflective sign have been tagged and that during the planning public meeting the project manager had said Cascade Bike Club would remove graffiti. Ed Bronsdon said graffiti should be reported to the City's graffiti removal website.

Approval of March meeting minutes. The March Minutes were approved.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Paving Project NE 125th Street and Sand Point Way down to NE 77th Street (Art Brochet, SDOT). NE 125th Street will be repaved all the way from I-5 to Sand Point Way NE, and possibly then down Sand Point Way to NE 77th Street as part of Bridging the Gap. Additional handicap access ramps will be installed on NE 125th and a pedestrian refuge island at 20th Avenue NE, but there will be no additional traffic signals. West of 35th Avenue NE there will be one lane of traffic in each direction during construction, closure of the I-5 northbound off-ramp and of the NE 125th-Lake City Way NE intersection for two nights. East of 35th Avenue NE and potentially on Sand Point Way, the roadway is narrower and during construction there may be single travel lanes during daytime non-peak hours, with flaggers; detours may occur for Sand Point Way southbound. Work will be scheduled for nights and weekends, as much as possible. Work is scheduled to begin in July and to be completed by the end of the year. Neighbors within a few blocks of NE 125th will be receiving postcard notices and there will be outreach to the Laurelhurst, Windermere North, View Ridge and Hawthorne Hills communities. Anyone can ask to have his/her name added to the stakeholders list to receive updates by going to the project website: www.seattle.gov/transportation/pave_ne125.htm

or e-mailing Art Brochet at art.brochet@seattle.gov.

Tom Kelly mentioned he had sent a suggestion for adding in high benefit/low cost cycle and pedestrian improvements on the portion between the Magnuson North Shore gate and the Burke-Gilman spur including a crosswalk and signs at the spur and improved surface along the wide north shoulder. Brochet answered that it seemed a good idea and he and bicycle program staff would be meeting on it later in the week, but it would depend on if funding is available within this project and perhaps also within the bicycle program. Diana Kincaid asked if the streets would be widened. The answer is no.

NOAA Road Update (Diana Kincaid): Diana sat in on a teleconference between Mr. Tom Eckart of NOAA's DC office and the Parks Department to discuss an access road from the existing NOAA Road to the north end of the park. Mr. Eckart's boss, Ed Horton had suggested a pilot program to begin in June, but the decision now is that NOAA will only support a permanent solution. Eckart cited issues with the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), union issues, and the projected cost of \$350-450,000 for the road for which it has no funding. NOAA wondered if the City of Seattle could come up with the money. The City is paying for a traffic study. The pilot project would have cost only \$25,000. The Department of Commerce, which would build the road, is lacking a Secretary and an under-Secretary, so it is hard to ask our Congressional delegation to apply pressure—they have no one to apply pressure to. Maria Cantwell's office appears involved. Diana suggested MPAC and other groups and individuals with an interest in the park write letters to Mr. Tom Eckart and Mr. Ed Horton urging start of the pilot project, and cc'ing Cantwell, Murray and McDermott.

Parks Legacy Plan (Diana Kincaid). The Parks Department is currently working on a "legacy plan" to clarify its vision for the future and its priorities. There will be a series of six public meetings in May with different topic areas, some hosted by the Parks Board of Commissioners; people are urged to attend and bring their concerns and ideas, even if these might not match up with the stated topic area.

Building 30 Update (Isabel Hamilton): Building 30 will open in July 2013. All the E-wing tenants are moving back in. There will be 30 studio spaces available, some with windows renting for \$12SF and others without windows renting for \$10SF. The displaced artists from Building 11 will be given first priority on the studio spaces, since many of them worked so hard to insure artists would continue to be a presence at Magnuson Park. Then Isabel will draw from the 2004 waiting list. She is taking suggestions on how to make this work and is seeking buy-in from MPAC or further input as to how the spaces should be allocated, fairly. The public benefits component may be met by a rental gallery or a rental classroom. The Officers Lounge will become a high-end meeting space available for rentals for weddings and other special occasions. Diana Kincaid suggested possible art classes for children since the Seattle public schools are cutting back on these. Julianna Ross commented that SPACE would partner with ArtCorps.

Seattle Musical Theater (Janet Pope) Janet Pope, the Executive Director of the theater, ran down the history of the theater's presence in the park. In 2008 they moved into Building 47—the former naval movie theater. Originally the group focused on light opera, especially Gilbert & Sullivan, but the average age of attendees at these performances was 65-70 and attendance at the 400-seat theater ran around 80. In 2010 Janet was hired. Her efforts have been to make the performances more interesting to all ages. The average attendance is now

300. Ticket sales comprise 60% of their income. They have a 5-show season, summer camps, adult and youth acting workshops. Funding is received from the ArtsFund, the “United Way” of the arts. A major rehab is being undertaken to open a door from their current space to the swimming pool area, cover the pool with decking, abate the lead there, and use the additional space for a scene shop, a costume shop, and conference rooms. Seattle Musical Theater also rents out its space; tenants have included Outdoors for All, Cascade Bicycle, and the Seattle Folk Festival. Vouchers are available for the upcoming performance of Gypsy Rose Lee; e-mail Janet at jpope@seattlemusicaltheatre.org. The theater does not compete with Fifth Avenue downtown; it is not an equity company, but more of a stepping stone for recent dramatic arts graduates.

Building 9 Status Update: (Gerry Pollet) The House Capital Budget contains \$10M for Building 9 and \$4M to reimburse the University of Washington for costs incurred to date. Republican members of the House have agreed to the budget. The Department of Commerce met yesterday and will take title to Building 9 soon. The RFP will be issued 6-8 weeks after the budget is approved. The Department of Commerce seeks an advisory group to assist with the RFP process and then with interactions with the developer. Members might be 2-3 individuals from MPAC along with 2-3 individuals from the housing industry. Construction is estimated to begin spring 2014. Rep. Pollet will e-mail Julianna the names of the two individuals from the Department of Commerce who will attend MPAC’s May meeting to update the group about the process. Julianna Ross questioned why the \$20M she had been told the State would put up for the rehabilitation was now only \$10M. Did this mean the project was endangered, given that the total rehab costs are estimated at \$50-60M? Rep. Pollet said the remaining money existed in the form of historic tax credits, and the Department of Commerce was planning to move forward in a very timely way with the project.

Radiation Remediation Building 27 (Rep. Gerry Pollet) The amount of radium contamination in the south shed adjacent to Building 27 at 4800 urem (microrem)/hour is extremely serious. The radium is housed in a shed protected by a cyclone fence labeled CONTROLLED AREA. Rep. Pollet called the 425-xxx-yyyy number on the sign. The individual who answered said there was no hazard there. The CONTROLLED sign was only in place because “there’s been work going on there for over a year,” and in any case Shorett Engineering had not had responsibility for the site for over a year. (Apparently the outdated sign was missed when contractors were changed.) Pollet stated that the signage is non-informative and not up-to-date and presents a problem for emergency responders who need to know what the hazard is—if it is radiation, they will not put out a fire with water, because water spreads the contamination.

Pollet observed that Seattle Parks and the Navy have known about the contamination since 2009, yet absolutely nothing has been done in three years. The Navy had a duty to report the radiation to the State Department of Ecology, not to the State Department of Health. The Navy stated it had sent a letter to Ecology in 2009; Rep. Pollet called Ecology who claimed they had never received this notification. Later Ecology found the letter and stated that because of changes of staff, the letter had not been acted upon. Rep. Pollet said, “There is a lot of finger-pointing going on.”

Another of Pollet’s concerns was that radium gives off radon gas; yet the site has never been tested for the presence of radon gas. Rep. Pollet distributed a copy of a letter he had written that afternoon to the Department of the Navy, to Acting Parks Superintendent Christopher Williams, and to the Washing Department of Ecology.

Rep. Pollet commented that the Parks' and Navy FAQ was non-informative and did not fully disclose the problem. The URL should be on the fact sheet. The information which is available about the radiation should be totally disclosed in language which is understandable to the general public.

In discussion about whether the Parks Department or the Navy is responsible for the clean-up, Rep. Pollet asserted that the legal responsibility lay with the City. Leslie Yuenger (NACFAC NW PAO) stated that the Navy had the responsibility and was doing clean-up under CERCLA. Rep. Pollet commented that the Federal Superfund law (CERCLA) had to meet the more stringent state law standards.

Dina Ginn, also with the Navy, clarified that the Navy was going forward with a "removal action." Public notice would be out in two weeks. She refers "radon" issues to the Navy, to the Federal CERCLA guidelines, and to the WA State Department of Health. She admitted there was or could be radiation in the soil, but, since the area was fenced off and covered by pavement, this would not pose a hazard for children. Rep. Pollet commented that because of rodent infestation in the old buildings, their waste spreads contamination. Having a fence does not control the access. Morgan Collins inquired about contaminated ground water flowing into the lake. He said in a heavy rain, water with petroleum bubbles up, and he wondered if it was radioactive petroleum.

The Navy spokeswoman stated Navy would be "in the field" by the end of May and removal would be completed by the end of November. Rep. Pollet asked again why the issue had gone unaddressed since 2009. The spokeswoman said it had been viewed as a non-critical action. The presence of the fence eliminated the problem of thieves and break-ins. Gerry Pollet asked would the Navy hold a public meeting? The spokeswoman responded that they were meeting with the Northeast District Council, with Rod Dembowski, and with Sally Bagshaw. Rep. Pollet commented that Radium 226 is an alpha emitter. There should be a RADCON magenta sign warning of the yard.

Nancy Bolin suggested that MPAC write its own letter to these individuals, insisting that the WA Department of Ecology be involved, asking for public involvement in the form of public meetings, and addressing similar concerns at Building 2. Julianna Ross stated MPAC would host a special meeting on this issue.

Programming Updates: Given that the meeting had run over by almost half an hour, the Chair proposed to postpone Programming Updates until the May meeting. Cheryl Fraser did bring to the group's attention an April 17th meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Board in which controls and incentives for the Sand Point Naval Air Station Landmark District would be discussed.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:58PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Chiarello
Secretary